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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [PINR](#) [MD](#)
SUBJECT: DPM DODON BELIEVES COMMUNISTS SHOULD
GIVE EIGHT VOTES TO LUPU

Classified by: Ambassador Asif J. Chaudhry for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Ref (A): Chisinau 643

¶1. (C) Summary: In a September 3 meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Dodon told the Ambassador that he believes the Communist Party (PCRM) should give the eight votes necessary to elect Alliance for European Integration (AIE) candidate Marian Lupu as President. However, he said, President Voronin remained stubbornly opposed to supporting Lupu. Dodon noted, however, that Voronin had appeared subdued and humbled over the past week, and said he believed that the Acting President would step down on September 14 and could leave the political scene altogether. Dodon confirmed that there were some 9-10 Communist MPs who believed it better for the PCRM to vote for Lupu, but he appeared unsure whether this group would break from the party to do so. End Summary.

Dodon Believes PCRM Should Give Votes to Lupu

¶2. (C) In a September 3 meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Igor Dodon told the Ambassador that he thinks the Party of Communists should give the necessary eight votes to allow Marian Lupu to be elected as President. However, he indicated, pointing ominously at the picture of Voronin on the wall, that the Acting President was dead set against voting for Lupu and would prefer to go to new elections in 2010. Dodon, however, predicted that the Communists would likely win no more than 30 seats in a repeat vote, and hence repeat elections were not in their favor.

¶3. (C) Dodon said that there were about 9-10 PCRM MPs who also thought that it would be better to vote for Lupu and go into opposition. These included Prime Minister Greceanii, Presidential Advisor Mark Tkaciuk, and former Deputy Speaker Gregori Petrenco. Despite Voronin's opposition, Dodon said that there has been some talk among certain MPs of the need for flexibility on the eight votes.

The Emperor Has No Clothes

¶4. (C) Dodon noted that at the PCRM Central Committee meeting a few days earlier, Voronin had asked the assembled group about the public mood in the country. In what Dodon called "typical" fashion, one by one the members of Voronin's inner circle stood up and told him that the people believed the Communists should stay strong and

stand firm in refusing to compromise with the Alliance.

15. (C) Dodon told the Ambassador that when his turn came, he told Voronin directly that people were saying that the PCRM was in a weak position. According to Dodon, he said people were wondering how the GoM could let the violence happen on April 7, despite their control of the mass media, police and military. He said he also told Voronin that people saw the PCRM's inability to elect a President as the biggest sign of weakness -- when the Communists had 60 seats (after the April election), they could not even muster one additional vote (needed to elect the President). Dodon said he told the President that it was now necessary to do something to change that public perception of weakness. As soon as the session ended, he said, several of those who had praised Voronin to his face came over to congratulate Dodon for his frankness.

Voronin and Russia Fear Ghimpu's Pro-Romanian Stance

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16. (C) Dodon told the Ambassador that both Voronin and the Russians have been spooked by Liberal Party leader Ghimpu's election as Speaker, and feared his pro-Romanian, anti-Russian orientation. The Ambassador asked why, if the Communists feared

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Ghimpu (who is set to become acting President when, as expected, Voronin steps down), they would not vote for former-Communist Lupu for President. Dodon agreed, and repeated his position that he personally favored having the Communists vote for Lupu.

17. (C) Dodon also said that Voronin was blaming Romania and the USG for PCRM's current situation. Though Dodon believed Tkaciuk actually understood that the U.S. was neutral, no one had been able to convince Voronin of American neutrality.

Voronin and Government Leaving the Political Scene

18. (C) Dodon also noted that over the last week Voronin had seemed subdued and even humbled. Dodon believed there was a very good possibility that Voronin may leave the political scene. He stated that on the September 14 deadline (for new MPs to decide whether to remain in Parliament or retain their GoM seats), five Ministers would resign in order to keep their seats in Parliament. These MPs included Prime Minister Greceanii. According to Dodon, Voronin would issue a decree firing the rest of the Cabinet, and had already announced that he too would step down.

New Party Picture once Voronin Steps Down?

19. (C) Dodon suggested that once Voronin leaves, the more moderate group could take control of the party. However, he was unsure how likely this was to happen. Dodon said that the key stumbling block lay with Mark Tkaciuk. Tkaciuk, who retains considerable influence within the party, remained close to Voronin and would stay with him "until the end."

Comment

¶10. (C) Dodon believes that the PCRM would be better off giving the eight votes to Lupu, as they will likely get even fewer seats should repeat elections take place next year. He understands that the party's own interests are now held hostage to Voronin's wishes and would like to see the party take a different tack. He acknowledged that the politics within the party could shift if Voronin steps down and leaves politics. However, it appears that Dodon lacks either the resolve or the horsepower to lead a split. While he is a key player in the inner circle, Dodon is not actually a party member. Nonetheless, we cannot rule out a rapidly shifting set of calculations within the PCRM once Voronin steps down from the Presidency. With the "Old Man" gone, the new voices may be able to convince others that it is actually in the Party's interest to vote for Lupu and avoid repeat elections. In earlier reporting (Ref A), Dodon had indicated that some of the younger reformers were considering making a break to do so.

CHAUDHRY